



NOAA, NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE, WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE

Miami, Florida 33165

January 30 – February 3, 2012 is Florida Severe Weather Awareness Week



The week of January 30 to February 3, 2012 has been designated as Severe Weather Awareness Week in Florida. In conjunction with Florida's Division of Emergency Management and the American Red Cross, the National Weather Service will issue public information statements each day next week focusing on a specific weather hazard. On Monday, January 30, the hazard will be lightning. On Tuesday, January 31, marine hazards and rip currents will be discussed. Wednesday, February 1 will cover tornadoes and thunderstorms, and will feature a statewide tornado drill at 1010 AM. Thursday, February 2 will highlight hurricanes and flooding. Friday, February 3 will end the week with heat, cold and wildfire threats being discussed.

2011 was a year in which hazards such as tornadoes and flooding took center stage in South Florida. A total of six tornadoes were reported over South Florida, including three which caused significant damage in Broward and Glades counties. The estimated damage from these tornadoes was in the \$4-5 million range. Severe flooding affected parts of Broward and

Miami-Dade counties in October, leading to damages estimated at around \$3 million.

This is a clear example of the vulnerability of South Florida to multiple weather hazards, not just hurricanes and tropical storms. Speaking of tropical cyclones, South Florida once again was spared the direct effects of a hurricane, with a brush from Hurricane Irene on August 25th being the only noticeable and indirect impact of the season. Our recent streak of relatively uneventful hurricane season should not lead us to complacency, however, as South Florida remains one of the nation's most hurricane prone regions.

Some good news: for the second year in a row, no direct deaths were attributed to lightning for the second year in a row. This is the first time since 1970 that no direct lightning deaths were reported in consecutive years. Unfortunately, there were two deaths from rip currents and another boating accident related to weather in 2011.

Monitor the National Weather Service Miami/South Florida office website at <http://weather.gov/southflorida> and local media each day next week to see the articles corresponding to the featured weather hazard of the day.